

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO USMISSION BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BONN

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EEC EI

SUBJ: CHIRAC ON PARIS-DUBLIN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: IN NOVEMBER 12 IRISH TIMES, FRENCH PM CHIRAC GIVES INTERVIEW DESIGNED TO SET STAGE FOR HIS VISIT HERE NOV 14/15 (ACCOMPANIED BY FONMIN SAUVAGNARGUES). THROUGHOUT INTERVIEW, CHIRAC DEMONSTRATES DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF FRANCO-IRISH RELATIONS -- AND OF THINGS THE IRISH PUBLIC LIKS TO HEAR. BUT HE DIVERGES SUBSTANTIALLY FROM IRISH VIEW OF WHAT EC SUMMIT SHOULD ACHIEVE, SUGGESTING THAT IT SHOULD BE A "DE-MYSTIFIED ANTI-SUMMIT" WITHOUT "SPECTACULAR DECISIONS." END SUMMARY

1. BEFORE HIS FIRST QUESTION, REPORTER NOTED THAT PM COSGRAVE HAD REFERRED TO A "CLOSE IDENTITY OF VIEWS BETWEEN IRELAND AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FRANCE." REPORTER THEN ASKED FOR CHIRAC'S INTERPRETATION.

FRENCH PM SAW ONE IMPORTANT AREA OF PRACTICAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN FRANCE AND IRELAND: THE CAP. HE ALSO NOTED FREQUENT SIMILARITIES IN HISTORY, TRADITIONS, ECONOMIC STRUCTURES, AND "CULTURAL AMBITIONS." REPORTER TRIED TO FOLLOW UP ON BILATERAL PROBLEMS, BUT CHIRAC GOT BACK TO CULTURE PROMPTLY. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD USE HIS VISIT TO OPEN A NEW BUILDING FOR THE FRENCH CULTURAL SERVICE AND ALLIANCE FRANCAISE, NOTING THAT ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND IRISH PEOPLE ARE NOW STUDYING FRENCH (IN A POPULATION OF THREE MILLION).

2. CHIRAC DID NOT DIRECTLY DEAL WITH FONMIN FITZGERALD'S INSISTENCE ON A REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (SEPTTEL). FRENCH PM THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S SUGGESTIONS FOR REGIONAL POLICY ARE "RATHER EXPENSIVE" -- WHICH IS THE REVERSE OF FITZGERALD'S VIEW. AND, WHILE FITZGERALD WANTS FORTHCOMING EC SUMMIT TO PRODUCE A REGIONAL POLICY AT ALL COSTS, CHIRAC OBSERVED: "THE SUMMIT IS NOT MEANT TO PRODUCE A REVOLUTION. SUMMITS SHOULD BE DE-MYSTIFIED; HEADS OF GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ABLE TO MEET WITHOUT BEING MORALLY OBLIGED TO COME TO SPECTACULAR DECISIONS. I WOULD HOPE THIS SUMMIT WOULD BE A SORT OF ANTI-SUMMIT."

3. COMMENT: WE HAVE LONG BEEN IMPRESSED BY EFFORT FRENCH HAVE BEEN WILLING TO DEVOTE TO RELATIONS WITH DUBLIN. THIS IS ANOTHER INSTANCE. THE CHIRAC-SAUVAGNARGUES VISIT APPEARS TO BE A REAL WORKING TRIP, AND CHIRAC, JUDGING FROM HIS INTERVIEW, HAS THOROUGHLY READ HIS BRIEFING PAPERS. THE IMPACT IS BOUND TO BE SUBSTANTIAL IN A CAPITAL THAT HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN QUITE IN THE CENTER OF WORLD AFFAIRS.

4. IT IS PROBABLY A COINCIDENCE THAT FONMIN FITZGERALD IS USING PRECISELY THIS MOMENT TO PRESS FOR EC SUMMIT GOALS AT ODDS WITH FRENCH

DESIRES.
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